

Higher Education System in the Czech Republic



**CENTRE FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION STUDIES**



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
YOUTH AND SPORTS**

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1 BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic is a small country situated in Central Europe. It came into existence as an independent state when the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic split into two states on 1st January 1993.

The Czech Republic is historically divided into three regions Bohemia, Moravia and a part of Silesia.

The Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy. The head of state is the President, who is also the Supreme Commander of the Czech Armed Forces. His powers are given by the constitution. The President is elected for a term of five years by a joint session of both chambers of the Parliament – the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The 200 members of the Chamber of Deputies are elected for a four-year term under a system of proportional representation, and the 81 Senators are elected under the simple majority system for a six-year term. One third of the seats in the Senate come up for re-election every two years. Executive power is held by the Government. A coalition government was formed following the 2002 election.

Prague is the capital and the largest town of the Czech Republic. It is the seat of the President, the Government and the Parliament. The population of the city is over 1,3 million. Prague is a great cultural and economic centre, and a city of well-known historical significance. There are 5 metropolitan cities with a population exceeding 100 thousand – Brno, Plzeň, Olomouc, Ostrava and Liberec

The neighbours of the Czech Republic are Poland to the north, Austria to the south, the Slovak Republic to the east and the Federal Republic of Germany to the west.

The Czech Republic has an area of 78,886 sq. km. The country's topography is quite varied. The territory consists of 4,52% of flat lands, 50,18% of hilly terrain, 33,92% of highlands, and 11,56% of mountains. The highest point of elevation is the peak of Mt Sněžka (1,602 m above sea level). Many important European rivers (Labe, Odra, Morava, Vltava etc.) flow through the country. The Czech Republic lies in Central European Time Zone.

The Czech Republic has 10,3 million inhabitants. Three quarters of the population live in urban areas. The population density is 131 inhabitants per a sq. km. Since 1994 the population has been decreasing. Most inhabitants of the country are of Czech nationality. There are Slovak (3,1%), Polish (0,6%), German (0,5%) and Romany (0,3%) minorities.

About forty percent of the population can be described as religious. The biggest part of these are Roman Catholics.

The official language is Czech. The unit of currency is the "koruna" (abbreviation Kč) – Czech crown (CZK). 1 EUR is about 30 CZK (April 2003).

In the past, a network of ancient trade routes running from east, west, north and south intersected the country and therefore over the centuries, many nations of Europe have met here and influenced each other's destinies. The Czech lands are virtually a showcase of architectural styles, as reflected in their historic towns, castles and manor houses.

2 THE HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The first university in the Czech lands and in Central Europe, the Charles University, was founded in 1348 by the Czech King and the Roman Emperor

Charles IV. Thanks to this university, the Czech lands became an important European centre of culture and scholarship. The second university in our area was established in Olomouc in 1573. The development of higher technical education started with the foundation of the Engineering School in 1707. The statute and the name of this institution were changed to the Czech Technical University in Prague after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. The roots of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague reach back to 1799. Since 1898 it has existed in the form that we know today. The Czech-German Technical Institute, the precursor of the Brno University of Technology, was established in 1849. In the same century, the Higher Education Institute of Mining in Příbram and the Academy of Applied Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague were also founded. A large number of higher education institutions were established in the twentieth century. The Higher Education Institution of Veterinary Sciences was set up in Brno in 1918, in 1919 followed by the University in Brno, the Higher Education Institute of Agriculture in Brno, and the Trade School in Prague. The development of the Czech higher education system was interrupted by the Nazi occupation in 1939. After the end of the Second World War, the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague was established, the university in Olomouc was re-established, and the Higher Education Institute of Mining was re-developed and moved from Příbram to Ostrava. The Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Brno (later Drama and Music) was founded in 1947. Further faculties of medicine of Charles University were opened in Plzeň and Hradec Králové. The Military Technical Academy (later called the Military Academy) and the Military Academy of Medicine were established in 1951. In 1952 the Higher Education Institutes of Chemical Technology and Agriculture were separated from the Czech Technical University and became independent. Further independent higher education institutions were established in 1953: the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering in Plzeň, the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and Textile Engineering in Liberec, and the Institute of Chemical Technology in Pardubice. In the same year the University of Economics was established by fusing the School of Economics of the Czech Technical University and the Higher Education Institution of Political and Economic Sciences. In Plzeň, České Budějovice, Ostrava, Hradec Králové and Ústí nad Labem, Higher Schools of Education were made into Institutes of Education, and later became independent Faculties of Education.

Academic rights, freedoms and autonomy were restored to higher education institutions after November 1989. These were codified by the Higher Education Act of 1990.

Extensive international contacts, exchange of students and teachers, as well as the process of transforming research and teaching were immediately started up. New disciplines and new study plans came into being. New departments and new faculties were established. New higher education institutions were formed on this basis, and a number of existing institutions was restructured. Higher education institutions were established in 1991 in Plzeň, České Budějovice, Ústí nad Labem, Ostrava and Opava. The University of Education in Hradec Králové was established in 1992. Many of these new institutions were founded on the basis of faculties that were already in existence.

In recent years, some new names of universities have appeared. These names express the development and achievements of the institutions out of which they emerged. There are the Czech University of Agriculture in Prague, the Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno, the Technical University of Mining and

Metallurgy in Ostrava, the Technical University of Liberec, University of Pardubice, University of Hradec Kralové and Tomas Bata University in Zlin.

Private higher education institutions are a new phenomenon in the Czech higher education system. Their establishment was enabled by the Higher Education Act of 1998. At present time (March 2004) there are 34 private higher education institutions in the Czech Republic.

The development of Czech higher education also involves expansion of capacities of higher education institutions, which was urgently needed. The expansion of secondary education, the larger number of secondary school graduates, and the growth of interest in higher education all exerted considerable pressure from young applicants on higher education institutions. Higher education institutions are therefore increasing the numbers of enrolled students as well as their teaching capacities.

3 THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.1 LEGISLATION

Extensive autonomy, academic freedom, democratic internal mechanisms and broad space for rapid development were given to the higher education institutions by the Higher Education Act of 1990 and approved by the Higher Education Act of 1998 and its Amendment of 2001 (further Act).

The legal provisions give quite broad opportunities for institutional and programme diversification, including the possibility to establish private higher education institutions. The former state higher education institutions were transformed into public legal bodies with their own property and consequently changed management, and with the open way to multi-source financing.

3.1.1 DIVERSIFICATION

Three levels of higher education leading to the respective academic degrees (bachelor, master and doctoral) fit to the Act provisions as well as to the ideas of Bologna process. The amendment of the Higher Education Act adopted in April 2001 introduced bachelor study programmes as the obligatory first level of higher education, necessary precondition for continuation in any master study programme. There are only few exceptions, when a Master study programme has the traditional “long” form, starting after secondary school graduation. These have to be decided on by the Accreditation Commission.

Higher education institutions can be of university or non-university type, and both types can be public, state or private institutions. Higher education institutions of non-university type usually offer bachelor study programmes, if accredited they can provide master study programmes, however, they are not allowed to provide doctoral study programmes. Higher education institutions of university type offer programmes leading to a bachelor, master and in most cases also to a doctoral degree. The type of higher education institution is stated in its statute, in agreement with the expert standpoint of the Accreditation Commission.

Establishment of a higher education institution

Public and state higher education institutions are established and dissolved by an act of Parliament. Also any changes through merger, amalgamation (only with

other public higher education institutions) or division may be implemented by the same way.

Legal entities with their domicile in the Czech Republic are authorised to act as private higher education institutions if granted state permission by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (further Ministry).

3.1.2 ACCREDITATION

3.1.2.1 ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The Accreditation Commission is an expert body established in accordance with the Act. It is composed of 21 members, academic and professional experts appointed by the Czech Government on the nomination of the Minister of Education. The Minister discusses the nominations with representatives of higher education institutions, the Research and Development Council (the unit of the Government of the Czech Republic) and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

The Accreditation Commission may establish working groups to deal with the evaluation of specific matters and activities. The regulations for the Accreditation Commission and for its working group activities are defined in the Statute approved by the Government. Material and financial support for the activities of the Accreditation Commission is provided by the Ministry.

3.1.2.2 MAIN TASKS OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The Act requires that the Accreditation Commission issues its statement on applications for accreditation of study programmes; applications for the right to perform habilitation procedures and procedures for the appointment of professors; establishment, merger, amalgamation, splitting or dissolution of a faculty of a public higher education institution; applications of a legal entity for the award of state permission to operate as a private higher education institution; determination of the type (university or non-university) assigned to a higher education institution.

The Act further entrusts the Accreditation Commission with general care for the quality of higher education, involving evaluation of all accredited activities and publication of the results. It also entrusts it with elaborating a professional standpoint on further matters concerning higher education, which are presented for its consideration by the Minister.

3.1.2.3 ACCREDITATION

According to the Act, all types of study programmes are subject to accreditation. The award of accreditation to a study programme is a task within the competency of the Ministry. It involves the state agreement with the way the programme is to be delivered, including the right to award appropriate academic degrees. In the case that a study programme is not accredited, no applicants may be admitted, no lectures and examinations may be held, and no academic degrees may be awarded.

Accreditation is issued on the basis of an expert evaluation submitted to the Ministry by the Accreditation Commission. The evaluation should consider both the content of the study programme and the state of preparation of the higher education institution or other educational institution to deliver the programme.

The Ministry is bound by the Act not to award accreditation in the case of a negative evaluation of a study programme. In the case of a positive evaluation it is bound by an explicit list of grounds on which it may refuse to award accreditation.

Accreditation of a study programme is awarded for a limited period of time, usually for twice the standard length of the programme. In the case of doctoral study programmes, accreditation should not be awarded for a period of more than ten years.

A higher education institution or its unit may carry out procedures for obtaining “venium docendi” (habilitation) and procedures for the appointment of a professor only on the basis of accreditation. A similar mechanism to that for study programmes also applies in the case of the two mentioned procedures.

New obligations arise for the Accreditation Commission as a result of the possibility of establishing private higher education institutions. The Act stipulates the required form of an application for state permission to establish such an institution. The Ministry then asks the Accreditation Commission to present its standpoint on the design of study programmes prior to making its decision on granting state permission.

3.1.3 QUALITY EVALUATION AND ASSURANCE

3.1.3.1 INTERNAL EVALUATION

All higher education institutions are obliged to provide a regular internal evaluation and to make the results public. An additional requirement is to make a detailed description of the evaluation procedure within the internal regulations of the higher education institution. The framework for this obligation is very open, and it is left to the institution how to provide the evaluation and how to use its results.

Developments in the field of internal evaluation are very diverse, varying between very well organised systems and systems that are still not very good. There has been no motivation to share information and good practice among institutions, and this is felt to be a weakness of the present situation in this field.

3.1.3.2 EXTERNAL EVALUATION

The accreditation of study programmes, procedures for obtaining “venium docendi”, procedures for the appointment of a professor and state permission for running a private higher education institution should be regarded as a very effective means for ensuring the quality of higher education.

The Accreditation Commission should take care of the quality of higher education and perform comprehensive evaluations of educational, academic, research, developmental, artistic and other creative activities of higher education institutions, in accordance with the Act. Evaluation focuses on the overall activity of the institution or its part (usually faculty). The Accreditation Commission requires data on general characteristics of the faculty, staff and organisation structure, study programmes, research and development activities, equipment and funding.

Evaluation has been preferably an improvement-oriented procedure providing institutions with enough time to improve the negative findings before issuing any unfavourable decisions. Public reports, including details of the strengths and weaknesses together with relevant recommendations, are considered to be important issues for further improvement and development.

3.1.3.3 INTERNATIONAL EVALUATION

A number of Czech higher education institutions have undertaken during the last decade evaluations provided by international bodies or by foreign institutions. For example: quality audits by CRE - Czech Technical University in Prague, Palacky University in Olomouc, evaluation by the European Association for Veterinary Education - University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences in Brno, evaluation by a prestigious foreign university - Czech University of Agriculture in Prague evaluated by the Agricultural University in Wageningen, "Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales d'Ingénieurs" (FEANI) accreditation - received by 25 Czech faculties of technology, "International Gesellschaft für Ingenieur-pädagogik" (IGIP) accreditation - received by four higher education institutions, National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation in the U.S.A. (NCFMEA) - accreditation received by all Czech medical faculties, and others.

These activities are considered very useful for the evaluated institutions. They contribute to a better understanding of the importance of evaluation, and offer a new view on various evaluating mechanisms and approaches.

3.2 INTERNAL MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Higher education institutions, which are legal entities are traditionally divided into faculties. The Act stipulates matters in which faculties have the right to make decisions or act on behalf of the higher education institution. Higher education institutions of non-university type are not divided into faculties. The state higher education institutions, with the exception of the 3 military institutions and the Police Academy, were transformed in 1998 into public institutions. Public institutions have the right to use and deal with property transferred from the state to their ownership.

The **rector** is the head of a higher education institution. He/she is appointed by the President of the Czech Republic on the proposal of the institution's academic senate.

The academic senates, the scientific councils, and the newly established disciplinary commissions are self-governing academic bodies. The composition of self-governing bodies is left almost completely in the competency of the institution itself. The Act stipulates the minimum and maximum representation of students in the senate (from one third up to one half of the total number of members) and the minimum (one third) representation of external members in the scientific council.

The **academic senate** is the independent democratic and representative academic body, its members are elected from the academic community. The senate is a very important and powerful body. Its main decision-making duties/rights are to approve the annual budget presented by the rector, to decide on the establishment of new units of the institution, to approve the internal regulations of the institution and its constituent parts, and to approve the long-term plan for institutional development. The Act establishes a list of additional matters which should be approved by the senate, and the other matters to which the senate's assent is needed before they are approved by another body (rector or scientific council).

Members of the **scientific council** are appointed and dismissed by the rector, who is its president. The main duty is to perform the procedures for the appointment of professors and procedures for obtaining "venium docendi" (habilitation) as required by the Act.

The Act states the duty of public higher education institutions to establish a [board of trustees](#). The members of the board of trustees are appointed by the Minister, after consultation with the rector, for a period of six years. The members must not be from the respective higher education institution, they should be appropriate representatives from public life, local government and state administration.

There is a similar management structure at faculty level, with the exception of the board of trustees, which exists only at institutional level. A faculty is headed by the dean. He/she is appointed by the rector on the basis of the proposal of the faculty senate. As at the institutional level, the academic senate of a faculty is quite powerful and symbolically independent representative academic body. It is elected from among the faculty's academic community and it has at faculty level similar duties and responsibilities as the academic senate at institutional level. Again similarly the scientific council of the faculty appointed and headed by the dean deals preferably with the expert issues including approval of provided study programmes.

Private higher education institutions are in no way affected by the Act, as regards their internal management. Their structure is left open. The Ministry, however, reserves the right to register the statutes of private higher education institutions in the same way as with public higher education institutions.

3.3 REPRESENTATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The representation of higher education institutions is constituted by the Act. It is composed of two bodies. The members of the [Council of Higher Education Institutions](#) are delegated by the representative authorities of the academic community (by the academic senates, in the case of public higher education institutions). The [Student Chamber](#) is the special part of the Council of higher Education Institutions. The [Czech Rectors' Conference](#) is made up of legal representatives of the higher education institutions who are the rectors.

These representations are important partners of the Ministry in all key decisions concerning higher education. In particular, there are partners in discussions on budget rules.

3.4 ROLE OF THE STATE, RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION

3.4.1 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports represents the state in relation to higher education institutions. One of the main tasks of the Ministry is to allocate funding to individual higher education institutions from the state budget, and to monitor their proper use. The Ministry should also arrange favourable conditions for the development of higher education institutions and should co-ordinate their activities.

The Ministry decides on the accreditation of study programmes, habilitation procedures for obtaining „*venium docendi*“, and procedures for the appointment of professors. It accords state permission for the activities of private higher education institutions. The Act sets the Ministry tasks concerning procedures applied against higher education institutions whose measures are in contradiction with the Act. Further tasks concern the registration of internal regulations, i.e., statutes, scholarships awarded from the state budget, and material support for the

Accreditation Commission. The Ministry may use information from the Student Register, and appoints further members of state examination commissions.

The Act requires the Ministry to work out a long-term strategic plan for the development of the higher education system. Similarly, each individual higher education institution is required to elaborate a strategy for its own development. Both ministerial and institutional plans should be updated annually and should be available to the public.

Public long-term strategic plans should motivate the Ministry to become more concerned about the future development of higher education institutions. Negotiation of the ministerial plan and work on the plans of individual institutions should help to harmonize future developments. Furthermore, this process allows the state authorities to steer the system of highly autonomous and self-governed higher education institutions indirectly, by means of state budget allocations based partly on contracts of a type that take into consideration the consistency of institutional strategic development with state policy. It is hoped that public plans for higher education institutions will not only increase the quality of education, but will also contribute to their transparency and accountability.

3.4.2 THE CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES (CHES)

The Centre for Higher Education Studies consists from four departments. It preferably conducts research in higher education (Research Department), however it deals with other tasks which make use of the obtained research results: open and distance education (the National Centre for Distance Education), recognition and information on higher education in the Czech Republic and where applicable in other countries (the Centre for Equivalence of Documents about Education), and implementation of European Union programmes in education (the National Agency for Educational Programmes of the European Union – the Socrates programme).

The results of research are available to the domestic and foreign academic public in the form of monographic publications, but especially through the revue AULA issued by CHES quarterly in the Czech language and supplemented with the Aula Annual Digest in English language. CHES participates in international projects and publishing activity stemming from this, it is involved into the broad spectrum of international activities and it is the member of several supranational organisations.

4 FINANCING OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Act states that a public higher education institution is entitled to a state subsidy, with limits defining what this subsidy may be used for. It also makes outline adjustments to the regulations according to which the subsidy will be determined.

It is presumed that even in future the basic part of the budget of a public higher education institution will continue to consist of a state subsidy. There should also be more implementation of multi-sources funding: incomes from complementary activities of higher education institutions, yields from property, and other income from the state budget: from state funds and the community budget, yields from auxiliary activities, incomes from gifts and bequests, and from various study fees.

The above-mentioned auxiliary activities should serve the more effective use of human resources and property, but must not threaten the quality, extent and accessibility of the activities for which the public higher education institution was established.

The practice has been accepted that the amount of funding from the state budget to individual higher education institutions is fixed by a mutual agreement mechanism between the Representative Commission and the Ministry. The Commission (composed of representatives of the Ministry, the Czech Rectors' Conference, the Council of Higher Education Institutions and the registrars) deals very seriously and intensively with budgetary regulations, and tries to adjust them in a way that is as desirable as possible and is suited as much as possible to all higher education institutions.

The lump sum of state money for a particular institution is set on the basis of teaching and research performance.

Thus the main part of the budget for teaching is derived from the volume of teaching activity, and is calculated as a product of the normative number of students of a particular higher education institution and the normative (cost of study) of a study programme. It is anticipated that for several years this part of the teaching budget will continue to be the major element. The other part, which should continuously increase, is based on a contract depending on the harmony/correspondence between the institutional plan and the state plan. Only a small part of the teaching budget is allocated on non-normative rules.

The research budget also consists basically of two parts: a part related to so-called specified research connected to teaching activities, and a part devoted to research activities in general.

The grant for specified research is allocated on the basis of a formula taking into consideration research money received from various projects, number of professors and associate professors and number of students and graduates of master and doctoral study programmes. Institutional money for research plans refers to grants (in average for 5 years), which should gradually harmonise supported research and development with the relevant situation in EU countries. Grants are allocated on the basis of competition, projects are evaluated ex ante by the home and foreign experts and the quality of results may influence the next application for grant. The Research Centres programme is aimed to enhance the still inadequate co-operation among different sectors of R&D (institutions of the Academy of Sciences of the CR, higher education institutions, other research institutions, and industry). Efforts are directed toward collaboration in research training for PhD students, young researchers and the involvement in international research networks.

Private higher education institutions are obliged under the Act to ensure funding for their activities. The Ministry may provide such an institution with a subsidy only in the case that it acts as a non-profit institution. Similar criteria to those valid for a public higher education institution are used to determine the level of the subsidy in such a case.

5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

5.1 THE STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

At the present time (March 2004), 62 higher education institutions belong to the Czech higher education system. There are 24 public institutions, 4 state higher education institutions, and 34 private higher education institutions.

The public and state higher education institutions are university-type institutions. The private higher education institutions are non-university type institutions first of all due to the fact that they all were established only recently. The activities of the state

schools are partially regulated by the legislation of the appropriate Ministry, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior.

The Charles University, the Palacký University Olomouc, and the Masaryk University in Brno are traditional multi-field higher education institutions of university type, with a combination of humanities, natural sciences, theology and medicine. There are also six further multi-field university-type institutions in the Czech Republic, with a combination of social sciences, natural sciences and technical or agricultural sciences. The number of higher education institutions of university type for the arts and those focused on special fields of study, i.e., agriculture, veterinary science, chemical technology and economics, has remained unchanged.

The establishment of new higher education institutions and faculties has had a considerable influence on the regional structure of higher education. Opava has become a new seat of higher education. Detached faculties of higher education institutions have been established in Karviná, Jindřichův Hradec, Lednice na Moravě and Cheb. The most recent major change in the structure of higher education institutions was the establishment of the University of Tomas Bata in Zlín, on the basis of faculties previously belonging to the Brno University of Technology, which came into force in January 2001.

Changes of regional structure of public higher education in nineties

City	Acad. year 1989/90				Acad. year 02/03			
	Number of HEIs	Number of faculties	Number of students	Share of number stud.(%)	Number of HEIs	Number of faculties	Number of students	Share of number stud.(%)
Total CR	23	69	89,2	100,0	24	117	235,9	100
Praha	8	32	39,1	43,9	8	36	90,1	38,2
Brno	5	14	20,5	23,0	5	25	49,6	21,0
Ostrava	2	5	7,9	8,9	2	11	22,1	9,4
Plzeň	2	4	5,0	5,6	1	7	13,6	5,8
Olomouc	1	4	4,9	5,5	1	7	14,9	6,3
Liberec	1	2	2,5	2,8	1	6	7,0	3,0
České Budějovice	1	2	2,3	2,5	1	5	7,1	3,0
Hradec Králové	1	3	3,2	3,6	1	4	7,9	3,3
Ústí nad Labem	1	1	1,6	1,8	1	4	6,7	2,8
Pardubice	1	1	0,8	0,9	1	4	5,4	2,3
Opava	-	-	-	-	1	1	1,8	0,8
Zlín	-	1	0,6	0,7	1	3	4,3	1,8
Cheb	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,5	0,6
Jindřichův Hradec	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,1	0,5
Karviná	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,9	0,8
Lednice na Moravě	-	1	0,5	0,6	-	1	0,9	0,4

Notes and explanations:

Number of students in all forms of studies, including foreign students.

Number of students is in thousands (round).

Share of number of students = share of number of students of regional centre in total number of students (in %)

The changes in the structure of higher education institutions have led to changes in the proportion of students in the population. About 38% of students now study in Prague compared with nearly 44% in 1989, in Brno 21% compared to 23%. Prague and Brno now attract roughly 7% less students, who now go to regional centres such as Ostrava, Pardubice, Cheb, Jindřichův Hradec and Karviná.

Private higher education institutions have been established in 14 towns and cities in the Czech Republic. Their study programmes focus on economics (56%), law (9,5%), informatics and various types of computer sciences (5%), the arts (9,5%) and applied ecology (5%), humanities, theology, sociology and pedagogy branches (10%) and health service (5%).

5.2 STUDY PROGRAMMES AND DEGREES, ORGANISATION OF STUDY

Higher education involves study in one of three types of accredited study programmes – bachelor, master and doctoral programmes.

In the framework of the Bologna process, bachelor study programmes are being introduced as the obligatory first stage of higher education enabling their graduates either to enter the job market or to continue their studies (immediately, or after some work experience).

A bachelor study programme lasts at least 3 and at most 4 years. The academic degree of "bakalář" (Bachelor) in abbr. "Bc." in many fields, and "bakalář umění" (Bachelor of Art) in abbr. "BcA." in the field of arts, is awarded on the basis of due completion of a study programme by a State final examination. Part of this examination usually involves the presentation of a bachelor project or thesis. The bachelor study programmes are offered in many fields except medicine, veterinary medicine, pharmacy and some others, which cover only specific study fields and run in parallel with the former not-divided master study programmes.

Master study programme is aimed at presenting new theoretical findings based on scientific knowledge, research and development. Students are required to master the application of these findings and to develop skills for creative and scientific activities. Master study programme is completed by a State final examination, and in most cases by the presentation of a diploma thesis.

In principle a master study programme is based on two-tier construction. The length of a continuing master study programme (after completion a bachelor study programme) is 1-3 years. In exceptional cases, the so-called "long" master study programme takes in average 5 years (6 years in medicine, veterinary medicine) and does not require the previously completed bachelor study programme.

Master programmes in technical fields of study, economics, agriculture and chemistry lead to the award of the academic degree "inženýr" (Engineer), abbr. "Ing."

Medical studies, including dentistry, lead to the academic degree "doktor medicíny" (Doctor of Medicine), abbr. "MUDr.", while veterinary studies lead to the academic title "doktor veterinární medicíny" (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine), abbr. "MVDr."

Graduates of master programmes in the field of architecture at a faculty of architecture will be awarded the academic degree "inženýr architekt" (Engineer Architect), abbr. "Ing.arch."

Master programmes in the humanities, education, the social sciences, the natural sciences, pharmacy, law and theology lead to the academic degree of "magistr" (Master), abbr. "Mgr."

The Act enables the holders of the academic degree "magistr" to take a State rigorous examination in the same field and present a dissertation for the purpose of acquiring an academic title: "doktor práv" (Doctor of Law), abbr. "JUDr." in the sphere of law, "doktor filosofie" (Doctor of Philosophy), abbr. "PhDr." in the sphere of the humanities, education and social sciences, "doktor přírodních věd" (Doctor of Natural Sciences), abbr. "RNDr." in the sphere of natural sciences, "doktor farmacie"

(Doctor of Pharmacy), abbr. "PharmDr." in the sphere of pharmacy, and "doktor teologie" (Doctor of Theology), abbr. "ThDr." or "licenciát teologie" (Licentiate of Theology), abbr. "ThLic." in the sphere of theology.

The graduates of master study programmes in the field of arts are awarded the academic degree "magistr umění" (Master of Arts), abbr. MgA.

The abbreviations of all academic degrees mentioned above are written before the name.

All master study programmes and awarded academic degrees are comparable with the equivalent programmes delivered at this level offered by foreign higher education institutions.

The third type of study programme, at doctoral level, follows an individual study plan under the guidance of a supervisor. The entrance condition is the graduation from a master programme. Doctoral study programmes are aimed at scientific research and independent creative activity. Graduates of master programmes may apply for a doctoral programme. This programme has a nominal length of three years. The programme is finished with the State doctoral examination and the presentation of a dissertation in which the applicant demonstrates his/her independent research skills, theoretical knowledge or independent theoretical and artistic creativity (in relevant fields). These programmes lead to the academic degree "doktor" (Doctor), abbr. "Ph.D.", or for theological fields "Th.D.", written behind the name. The number of students taking these study programmes is constantly increasing.

Study programmes are offered in the form of face-to-face full-time study or part-time distance study, or by a combination of both. While distance education does not have deep traditions in the Czech Republic, since the beginning of the 1990s it has been developing continuously.

Studies are usually divided into two semesters (winter and summer), academic years, or blocks. Each semester, year or block consists of lecturing periods, examination periods and vacations. The length of an academic year is twelve calendar months. The rector specifies the commencement of an academic year. The number of teaching weeks and the length of the examination period are determined by the dean of the faculty.

The study and examination rules form part of the internal regulations of each higher education institution or faculty. Study results are evaluated by examinations, supervised written work, project work or colloquia. Examinations may be oral, written or combined.

Each higher education institution uses some kind of credit system. The systems have not yet been standardised, though there is considerable interest in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) or a system, which can be easily converted into ECTS. To achieve unity is a major goal of the long-term strategic plans of both the Ministry and the individual institutions.

5.3 LIFELONG LEARNING

The activities of Czech higher education institutions in the sphere of adult education already have a century of tradition, begun in the early 20th century by so-called university extensions. At the beginning of the 1950s extra-mural study was started at most higher education institutions, enabling adults to acquire a full higher education.

After the worldwide declaration of the concept of lifelong learning, this activity took on a conceptual character, and in 1990 even gained legal support in higher education legislation.

Apart from enabling students to take complete higher education programmes, a wide series of further study projects are being organised. At several higher education institutions centres or institutes of lifelong learning have been established to offer a whole range of educational activities to enable participants to improve their qualifications, re-qualify, or follow up special interests. This trend is rising rapidly. In the sphere of adult education a number of higher education institutions also co-operate with foreign universities in various fields, especially in the study of management, language education, etc.

Higher education institutions are also co-operating in the education of senior citizens in the form of "Universities of the Third Age". Such programmes have been established in 16 faculties, with a varied range of content and prolongation.

In recent years, the traditional extra-mural form of study has, in most cases, been transformed into the form of combined or distance study. To receive accreditation of study programme aimed for full distance teaching is quite demanding procedure and the higher education institutions provide more frequently study programmes using combined study technology.

5.4 NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

At the beginning of the 1990s, higher education institutions in the Czech Republic gradually became acquainted with distance education technology. The main reason is all the time increasing demand of applicants in these forms of study.

In the Czech Republic there are no plans for establishing an independent open university, such as exists in some countries in Western Europe. The development trend is leading rather to the utilisation of distance education simultaneously with face-to-face study, in other words the development of a kind of dual higher education institution in this sense.

Distance education is based on a system of controlled self-study, and requires very good technical equipment at the educational institution. It demands relatively large initial investment in the preparation of high-quality study aids, in facilities of distance study centres and in the training of educational staff, administrative and other workers. For these reasons, the development of distance education in the Czech Republic has been proceeding only slowly.

A major contribution to the development of distance education in the Czech Republic was supported by the EU through the Phare Programme, through the multi-country project closed in 1999. The main outcomes were the establishment of the quite well equipped (technical equipment, Internet access, distance education library) National Centre for Distance Education (NCDE) and four local centres of distance learning (Prague, Liberec, Brno and Olomouc). They form the basis of distance education network in the Czech Republic. The first steps of collaboration with the European distance education network were made and the further development supported by the state long-term plan is expected.

6 ACCESS

Access to a bachelor study programme or in some study fields (approved in exceptional cases by the Accreditation Commission) to a 4 to 6 year master study

programme is conditional on graduating from a gymnasium or a secondary vocational school by the “Maturita” examination. Applicants for art education may in exceptional cases also be admitted without a completed secondary education.

To access to a continuing master programme, graduation from a relevant bachelor study programme, or equivalent, is required. There is no uniform admission procedure at higher education institutions in the Czech Republic, either for home students or for foreign students. According to the Act, an applicant should demonstrate not only the required degree of education but also the necessary ability and motivation to pursue higher education studies. Methods of examining and selection are in the competency of the faculty or of the higher education institution if the higher education institution isn't divided into faculties or programmes are offered by the institution. The conditions of acceptance are approved by the academic senate of the higher education institution or faculty. In practice, there is usually a written examination, an interview, or both. For art schools, faculties of architecture, faculties of education, sports studies and dentistry, part of the examination is a test of talent or practical skills.

There are no stipulated restrictions on admissions (“numerus clausus”) at higher education institutions in the Czech Republic. Entrance examinations are however administered due to the limited capacity of a given higher education institution or faculty and available financial means. Many faculties also require the applicant to be at least 18 years of age.

Admission to a doctoral study programme is conditional on graduation from a master study programme; doctoral students in the field of the arts must hold an academic degree. Applicants are required to take a special entrance examination or an interview.

Secondary school leaving certificates gained abroad are subject to nostrification. If an international agreement on recognition of equivalence exists, confirmation of the equivalence is issued. The process of nostrification of documents enabling access to higher education is regulated by a decree of the Ministry. The decision-making bodies are the regional school authorities. Public higher education institutions and the Ministry are decision-making bodies for the recognition of foreign higher education diplomas. All documents are evaluated in harmony with multilateral and bilateral agreements binding for the Czech Republic in the area of the recognition, e.g., the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Convention), several Conventions of the Council of Europe, etc.

The advisory body in the sphere of recognition of documents on education is the Centre for the Equivalence of Documents on Education (part of the Centre for Higher Education Studies).

7 STUDENTS

A considerable increase in the number of students in keeping with the increased number of faculties (and institutions) is a characteristic feature of the last ten years. In the academic year 2003/2004, there are 269 694 students studying at public and private higher education institutions. In addition, there are nearly 4 500 students at state higher education institutions.

In the 2003/2004 academic year there are 1560 accredited study programmes at bachelor, master and doctoral level at Czech higher education institutions.

New entrants at higher education institutions (public and private, figures from the state higher education institutions are not included in the following table) by discipline

	Natural sciences progr.	Technic. Progr.	Agricult. progr.	Medicine progr.	Econom. progr.	Teacher Educat. progr.	Humanit. and soc. progr.	Art progr.	Total
1989/90	898	10 620	2 570	2 321	3 001	5 027	1 876	473	26 786
1990/91	1 733	9 863	2 252	2 092	2 522	4 777	3 565	703	27 507
1991/92	1 210	8 319	1 510	1 541	2 983	4 558	3 262	526	23 909
1992/93	1 680	9 921	1 803	1 753	4 131	5 780	4 084	643	29 795
1993/94	1 699	11 568	1 899	1 712	5 067	5 952	4 458	694	33 049
1994/95	2 552	14 518	2 483	2 221	6 579	6 731	4 324	711	40 119
1995/96	2 925	13 671	2 897	2 404	7 461	8 210	5 344	910	43 822
1996/97	3 341	15 164	3 220	2 710	7 837	7 647	6 181	922	47 022
1997/98	3 957	16 533	2 578	3 088	8 091	7 653	6 934	1 033	49 867
1998/99	4 195	17 314	3 038	3 141	9 549	7 918	7 213	1 096	53 464
1999/00	2 979	15 660	1 955	2 931	7 782	7 804	6 338	885	46 334
2000/01	4 115	10 453	1 904	3 019	10 027	7 156	6 292	922	43 888
2001/02	3 354	13 327	1 780	2 785	7 966	6 205	5 902	842	42 161
2002/03	3 434	12 933	2 008	3 038	10 795	7 032	6 714	770	46 724

Note: In 2001/02 and 2002/03 some private HEIs did not send the corresponding figures

The total number of students enrolled at bachelor and master study programmes at public, state and private higher education institutions in 2003/2004 was 58 000. That is 43% of the 19-year-old cohort of population.

The private non-university higher education institutions offer yearly around 1 500 study places. It has not had a significant influence on the overall study offer in number. But in some cases it has given the chance to be enrolled in the attractive study programmes running alongside of those offered by public institutions or to find special study programmes which has not been offered up to current time (for example hotel management, tourism).

Numbers of students at public and private higher education institutions (figures from the state higher education institutions are not included in the following table) by discipline

	Natural sciences	Technic . progr.	Agricult. progr.	Medicin e progr.	Econom . progr.	Teacher Educat. progr.	Humanit. and soc. progr.	Art progr.	Total
1989/90	3 831	40 461	10 275	10 335	12 633	22 298	8 126	2 062	110 021
1990/91	4 923	40 611	10 168	11 337	12 627	21 433	11 416	2 557	115 072
1991/92	4 787	36 290	8 765	10 762	12 504	20 589	13 093	2 429	109 219
1992/93	5 603	35 552	8 044	10 760	13 107	20 753	15 377	2 484	111 680
1993/94	6 314	36 054	7 446	10 320	15 994	21 486	18 232	2 996	118 842
1994/95	8 681	40 688	8 616	11 378	20 328	25 269	18 503	3 103	136 566
1995/96	10 238	42 649	9 266	11 590	24 163	28 540	21 967	3 735	152 148
1996/97	11 832	45 864	10 558	11 966	27 401	29 538	25 005	3 971	166 135
1997/98	13 355	49 683	10 300	12 694	29 405	30 725	27 417	4 144	177 723
1998/99	13 878	53 113	10 988	13 259	31 000	31 629	28 880	4 401	187 148
1999/00	14 194	58 489	7 836	14 324	35 631	32 800	30 995	4 692	198 961
2000/01	16 782	58 822	8 183	15 593	39 084	32 909	32 815	5 110	209 298
2001/02	18 417	61 966	8 586	16 553	42 429	33 281	36 372	5 409	223 013
2002/03	20 630	65 232	9 277	17 704	48 319	35 386	41 818	5 399	243 765

Note: This table includes numbers of foreign students studying in foreign languages outside international agreements

The total number of students at public, private and state higher education institutions is 269 694 in academic year 2003/2004.

Since 1999 the standard length of study programmes has been stipulated by the Act. A student is allowed to prolong his/her studies by one additional year. If a student's studies in a bachelor or a master study programme exceeds the standard length of the programme by more than one year, under the Act a public higher education institution sets a fee to be paid for each commenced month of study. It is anticipated that this measure will motivate students to complete their studies in due time. This would reduce the average time taken for a student to graduate.

Graduates from public and private higher education institutions, by discipline

	Natural Scien. progr.	Technic progr.	Agricult. progr.	Medicine Progr.	Econom. progr.	Teacher Educat. progr.	Humanit. and soc. sc.progr.	Art progr.	Total
1989	592	7 209	2 068	1 790	2 460	2 490	1 996	323	18 928
1991	552	6 361	1 992	1 370	2 215	3 913	1 371	269	18 043
1993	674	6 074	1 705	1 490	2 328	3 345	1 618	279	17 513
1995	1 077	4 143	1 330	1 809	3 618	3 890	2 622	312	18 730
1996	1 037	4 616	1 075	1 766	4 151	3 908	3 195	431	20 179
1997	1 341	4 847	1 429	1 832	5 203	3 944	3 843	495	22 934
1998	1 464	5 729	1 416	1 650	6 443	4 937	3 796	525	25 960
1999	1 387	5 930	976	1 719	7 070	4 826	4 300	479	26 687
2000	1.926	6 209	1 133	2 102	7 407	5 147	4 241	633	28 798
2001	1 971	6 668	1 176	2 138	7 296	5 400	4 166	904	29 719
2002	2 186	7 184	1 166	2 161	7 550	5 193	4 797	954	31 191

The total number of students graduating from bachelor, master and doctoral study programmes at public, private and state higher education institutions was 34 594 in 2003. The state strategy requires that about one half of all graduates should be from bachelor study programmes by 2005.

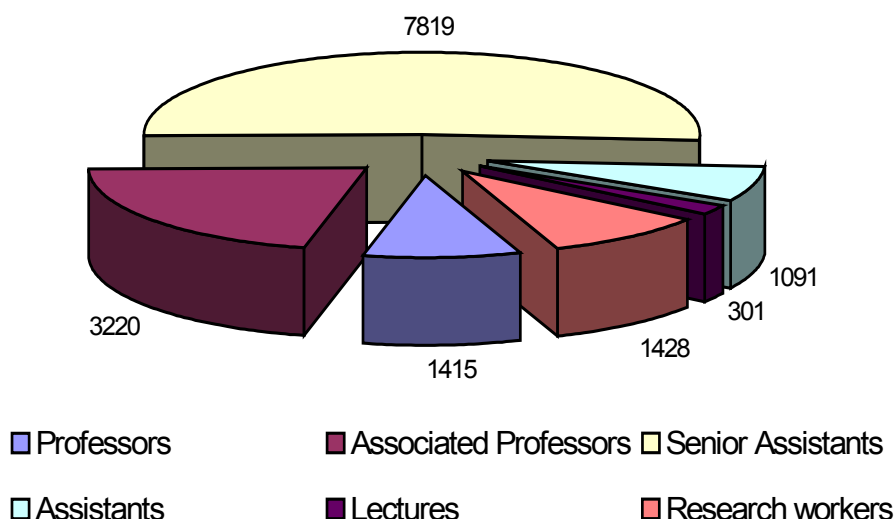
8 ACADEMIC STAFF

Academic staff consists of employees of higher education institutions, who carry out both teaching and scientific, research, development, artistic and other creative activities. This is also the explanation of terminology that members of academic staff are alternatively called higher education teachers (as it is used further). They comprise professors, associate professors, senior assistants, junior assistants, lecturers and scientific, research and development personnel participating in instructional activities. The rank of professor is achieved after passing successfully through a procedure in which the educational and scientific or artistic qualifications of the applicant are approved. The prerequisite for starting these proceedings is prior nomination as an associate professor on the basis of the so called habilitation procedure (*venium docendi*).

Access to employment as a higher education teacher is bound by the Act to the results of a selection procedure, and admission to employment is confirmed by a work contract. The working conditions are governed by general labour law standards.

Staff at public higher education institutions (full time equivalent)

	1990/91	1992/93	1994/95	1996/97	1998/99	2000/01	2002/03
Total staff	28 247	27 784	28 936	25 515	25 810	26 315	29 559
Acad. Staff	11 839	12 105	12 625	12 969	13 292	14 890	15 274
Non-acad. Staff	16 408	15 679	16 311	12 546	12 518	11 425	14 285



Currently, about 15 274 teachers and research workers (full time equivalent) are employed at higher education institutions. Of this number there are 1 415 professors, 3 220 associate professors, 7 819 senior assistants, 1 091 assistants and 301 lecturers and 1 428 research workers. External professionals working for higher education institutions include acknowledged experts from practice and from other research organisations, mainly from the Academy of Sciences of the CR.

9 RESEARCH IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Research is carried out at higher education institutions by their academic staff. Students working for master degrees and, of course, doctoral students are also included in research. Teachers combine teaching with research, development or other creative activities in a very different range. In general terms across the whole system of higher education, it can be estimated that roughly from one quarter to one third of working load of staff is research, development or other creative activities. Also those who devote most of their full working capacity to research and usually work in the purely research facilities of the higher education institution are engaged to a certain extent in teaching.

A much-discussed question is the ratio of higher education teachers to the number of students, which has also been the subject of analyses abroad. Teaching staff point out that the main obstacle to the more intensive development of research is the considerable burden of teaching. One aspect of this question may be a different consideration of the role and a different concept of doctoral studies in the

Czech Republic from elsewhere in the world. In Western universities there is far greater inclusion of postgraduates working for doctorates (and sometimes even students in their senior years) in teaching and in research. This makes both processes less expensive, and changes the quantitative ratio between teachers and students, the structure of the actual potential of teaching and research is altered, and the entire system becomes more flexible. In many Czech higher education institutions, a similar concept of the work for those studying for a doctorate is already taking root.

There are promising developments in co-operation between the higher education institutions and the Academy of Sciences: the joint participation of staff from both institutions in research and teaching, especially in doctoral studies, membership in management bodies of partner institutions and the establishment of joint facilities, and, especially, participation in joint research centres and projects. Mutual co-operation between the Academy of Sciences and the higher education institutions are significantly supported by the opportunity of jointly provided study programmes preferably at doctoral level. On both sides there is the will to support mutual communication and mobility, the reality, however, is still not fully satisfactory.

Co-operation with research in the business sector is proving less successful. This is clearly due to the still low demand for research results on the part of Czech industry. Industry's own problems are the main reasons of little current interest in developing co-operation with the universities on a broader scale. Research "to order"/"on demand", in the form of secondary economic activity, is until now the main type of co-operation with industry.

In general it may be said that in most higher education institutions of university type the position of research has been improving, and that research is once again considered the key activity of a higher education teacher. The proportion between basic research and applied research/development carried out at higher education institutions is estimated at around 2/3 to 1/3 in favour of basic research.

However, the development of research in higher education institutions is also accompanied, by serious problems as regards not only staff, but also funding, which are mutually closely connected. Serious problems are caused by current funding limits and also by the hidden debt from the past, revealing itself mainly in the form of inadequate research facilities, laboratories, etc. Research is also being abandoned by qualified researchers due to the more advantageous wage conditions in the business sphere.

Certain indications of a positive change can be predicated to the government's intention to keep increasing the state budget devoted to research, which is one of the key issues connected with the Czech Republic entering the EU. Nevertheless, this still more intention rather than reality.

The new mechanism for allocating the institutional research budget started in 1998 has been further developed. It is based on the research plans of a higher education institution, which give the institutions convenient stability being funded (on the basis of evaluation) for 5-7 years. Solving of first group of about 320 research plans was started in 1999. Share of the financial support of the research plans is currently around 40 % of the total financial support of R&D at the higher education institutions.

Another element of the mechanism is the possibility to establish and to fund Research Centres with the idea to enhance collaboration among different research institutions, the efforts on large, well planned projects, and to support young researchers.

Another positive indicator is the increasingly wide implementation of the grant system, the introduction of which means that research is gradually becoming an advantageous activity for higher education institutions. The proportion of the grants acquired from this source by higher education institutions has varied during the time currently it is around 35 % of the total financial support of R&D at the higher education institutions.

The Czech Republic has become a member of various international research programmes, the most important has been the Fifth Framework Programme and the expectation related the Sixth Framework Programme where projects involving higher education institutions should play an important role are also high. The benefit of internal and foreign funding from outside the higher education budget represents an important step towards multi-source funding.

10 THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

10.1 INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

International co-operation among higher education institutions takes place first and foremost on the basis of bilateral co-operation organised by the individual institutions. It is also supported by the scheme of the Ministry, which created a programme of transformation and development to support the student mobility within this direct inter-university co-operation. It forms bases for successful participation of Czech higher education institutions in other multi-lateral and/or bilateral programmes of European and regional co-operation as well

Co-operation within the framework of Inter-governmental Cultural Agreements

Within the framework of these agreements exchanges of specialists from the sphere of education, academic staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students take place. The contact centre is the Department of International Relations of the Ministry. Information on opportunities and conditions for exchanges is provided by the Academic Information Agency (AIA) of the House of Foreign Services of the Ministry.

Co-operation within the framework of international multilateral and bilateral programmes

This type of co-operation gains more and more importance, namely programmes of European Union for which the Ministry elaborated a special support scheme since the year 2000.

PROGRAMMES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The main EU programmes for co-operation in education, training and youth activities are SOCRATES, LEONARDO DA VINCI and YOUTH. The Czech Republic joined these programmes in 1997 and has continued to participate since 2000 under new rules in the new generation of programmes: SOCRATES II, LEONARDO DA VINCI II and YOUTH.

SOCRATES II

The SOCRATES II is a programme, which covers the entire education system from nursery schools to higher education institutions, including open and distance education, adult education, education of management workers, research on education, EURYDICE and NARIC co-operation. The important possibilities for higher education institutions are open through sub-programme ERASMUS, while several others like GRUNDTVIG, MINERVA, in some cases also COMENIUS, ARION, Observation and innovation complement the broad offer of activities.

ERASMUS

The ERASMUS sub-programme is the action of the SOCRATES programme directed toward higher education. The purpose of the ERASMUS programme is to improve the quality of higher education and strengthen its European dimension by encouraging transnational co-operation projects between higher education institutions, fostering the European mobility of students and teachers, and contributing to improved transparency and academic recognition of qualifications and studies.

The ERASMUS programme in the Czech Republic was launched in 1997. Today, all the public higher education institutions in the Czech Republic are actively involved in the programme, and some of the newly established private higher education institutions are also beginning to participate.

ERASMUS gives students the opportunity to study for a period of 3-12 months at a higher education institution in another participating country. The time spent in the other country is expected to be fully recognised at the home institution thanks to the ECTS system, which facilitates academic recognition of periods of study at partner institutions.

Since 1997 the following numbers of students and teachers took the advantage of the programme

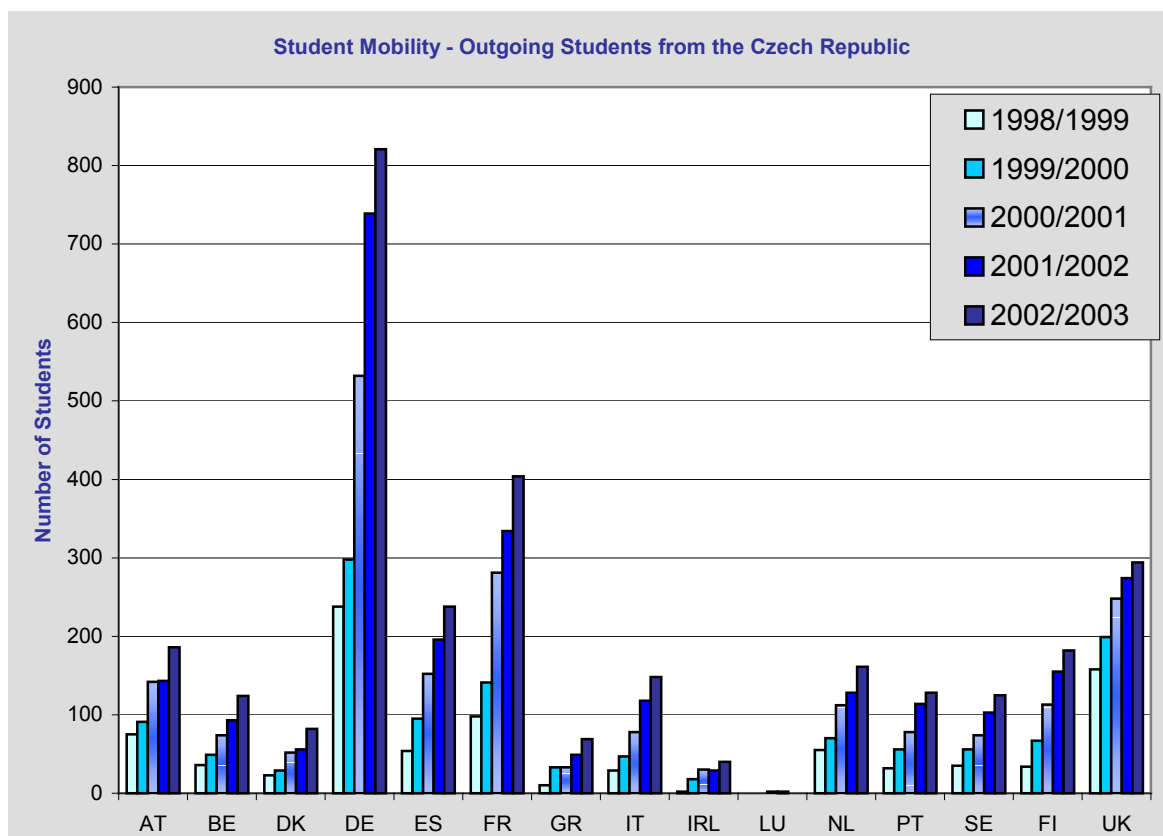
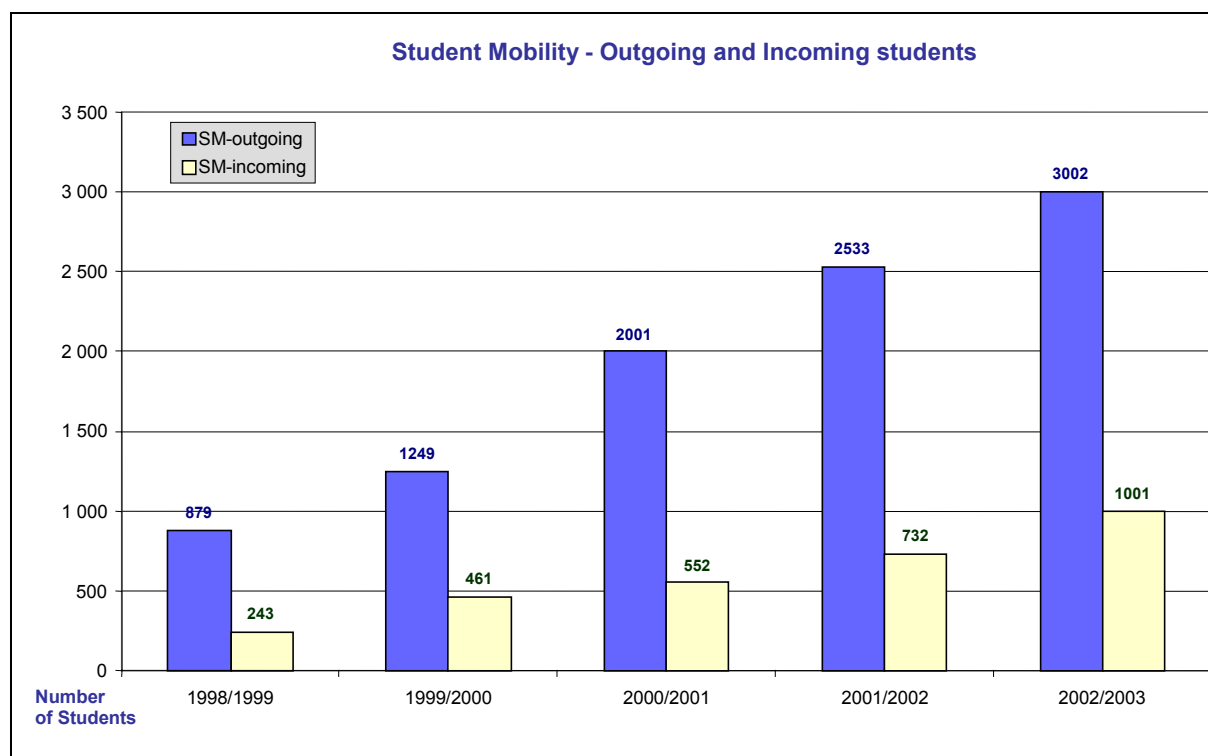
	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03
Outgoing students	879	1 249	2 001	2 533	3 002
Months	4 130	5 980	10 481	14 231	17 384
Outgoing teachers	366	408	636	782	973
Weeks	531	729	800	1 246	1 495
Incoming students	290	509	635	800	1 001

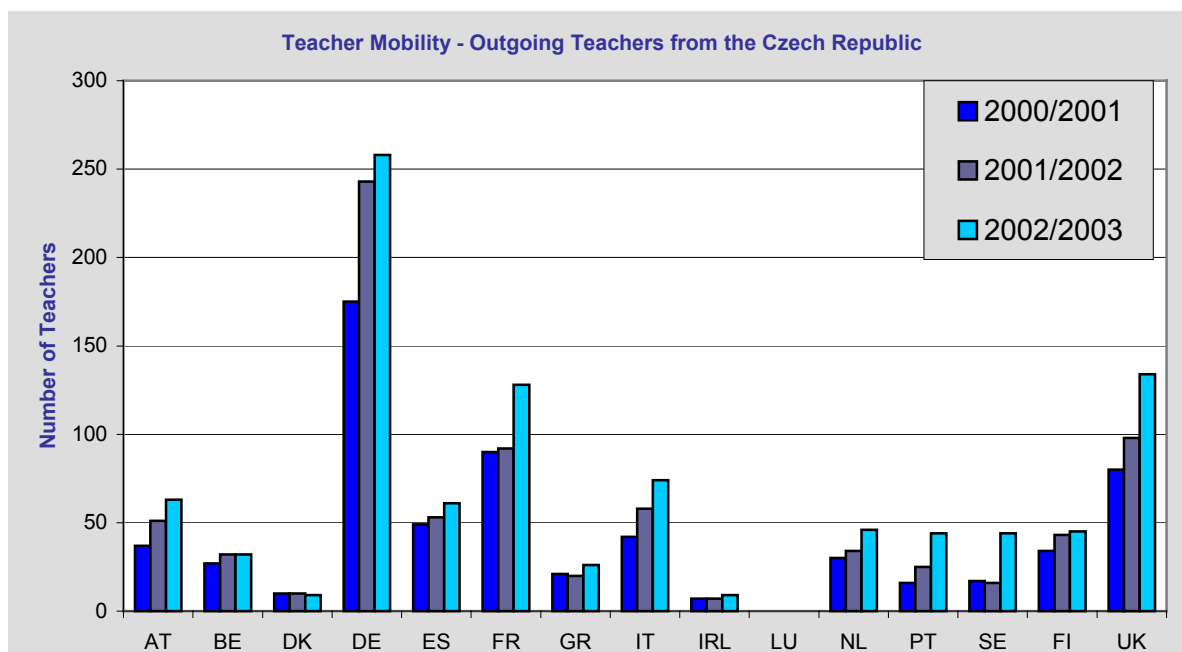
During the academic year 2003/2004 the total number of Czech students that have participated in the Erasmus programme has exceeded 10 000.

The rapid growth, namely between the years 1998/1999 – 1999/2000 (42% in student and 11% in teacher mobility), respectively 1999/2000 – 2000/2001 (60% in student and 56% in teacher mobility), was caused by introduction of the national co-funding scheme, developed by the Ministry in 2000. For illustration:

	EU funding	National funding
2000	2 136 086 EUR	1 691 692 EUR (52 443 000 CZK)
2001	2 205 865 EUR	5 107 000 EUR (158 319 757 CZK)
2002	2 271 664 EUR	5 728 300 EUR (176 500 000 CZK)
2003	2 271 335 EUR	6 321 002 EUR (210 000 000 CZK)

There is about 10% increase in the funds for co-financing the student and teacher mobility from the state budget in 2004.





Several activities of the ERASMUS programme relate directly to teaching staff. Apart from the teacher mobility, teachers have an opportunity to participate in joint development of curricula (Curricular development projects), in preparing Intensive programmes or joining Thematic networks.

LEONARDO DA VINCI II (Leonardo)

The LEONARDO programme supports, among other actions, the practical training and work placement of graduates from all types of higher education. The projects are supranational. Apart from various types of educational institutions, enterprises and other institutions involved in the employment of graduates and other young people may be project partners. In the period of 1996-99 there were 16 Czech higher education institutions participating as partners in 70 projects, 4 big projects were co-ordinated by the Masaryk University and West Bohemian University. In years 2000- 2002 12 Czech institutions gained 19 projects. Czech Technical University and West Bohemian University participated in the biggest ones.

Since the beginning of the programme (i.e.1996-2002) more than 4000 Czech participants took advantage from the Leonardo da Vinci practical placements, 10-11% were higher education students. The annual budget for mobility for the Czech participants (in total) is more than 1 mil. EUR.

JEAN MONNET PROJECT

The European Commission awards grants to offer higher education institutions an opportunity to develop new activities and research in areas connected with European integration, and to introduce "European" subjects into their curriculum. This concerns in particular the sphere of European Community Law, European Economic Integration, European Integration - Political Science Issues, and the History of European Construction. It is directed by the Directorate General for Education and Culture, Unit A2 for Higher education of the European Commission.

The co-ordination in the Czech Republic is provided by the Czech Association of European Studies (CAES).

REGIONAL CO-OPERATION PROGRAMMES

CEEPUS - Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies

This programme is aimed at multilateral co-operation in the Central European Region. It involves complex programmes that attempt to capture what is typical of this region. The programme came into effect on 1st December 1994, and the Czech Republic joined it in 1996. At present the member countries are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. with its special activity "thematic Networks" it also provides co-operation with the Balkan countries.

CEEPUS is intended for higher education students, postgraduate students and teachers. It is possible to join the programme within the network of higher education institutions or individually (as a "Free mover"). Emphasis is placed on activities within the framework of networks.

CZECH REPUBLIC- AUSTRIA AKTION - co-operation in research and education

This is a bilateral programme, which supports co-operation in higher education and research between both countries. The support is given in the form of scholarships for higher education teachers and students, joint-project grants and funding of bilateral language summer schools and courses organised in the Czech Republic.

VISEGRAD SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMME

The Visegrad Scholarship Programme is a specific programme of the International Visegrad Fund created for the purpose of facilitating academic exchanges by providing financial support for students who are citizens of the Czech republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia (V4 countries) and for foreign citizens to study in the V4 countries. Visegrad scholarships are provided for study/research projects. The length of supported study/research projects shall be one academic year, with possible extension.

BILATERAL CO-OPERATION OF CZECH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

At the present time, higher education institutions in the Czech Republic have a number of agreements on direct collaboration with higher education institutions abroad. The largest number of agreements have been signed by Charles University in Prague, the Czech Technical University in Prague, and Masaryk University in Brno. The largest number of agreements are with universities in Germany, the United States, Poland, France, Slovakia, Austria and Great Britain.

10.2 MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CO-OPERATION WITH THEM

The Ministry and the Czech Conference of Rectors are taking part in many international activities and co-operation projects and therefore it is possible to mention only the most important of them.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE – THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CD-ESR

The Higher Education and Research Committee of the Council of Europe organizes a number of activities and projects concerning up-to-date problems of higher education and research in Europe. The contact centre is the Higher Education Department of the Ministry.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE OECD

The institution responsible for the content co-ordination of co-operation with the OECD is the Education Policy Centre of the Institute for Research and Development of Education at the Faculty of Education of the Charles University in Prague. The Czech Republic has one representative in the Education Committee (EDC) and the representative in the Centre for Education Research and Innovation (CERI). The co-ordination centre for the project Indicators of Education Systems (INES) is the Institute for Information in Education. The Czech Republic is taking part in the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) - the institution responsible is the Centre for Higher Education Studies.

CO-OPERATION WITH UNESCO

Co-operation with UNESCO is safeguarded by the Department of International Relations of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The Jan Amos Comenius Medal has become a prestigious UNESCO award, presented for services in the sphere of educational research and development to selected pedagogues and pedagogical collectives from all over the world at the UNESCO World Conference on Education. This medal came into being as a joint award of the Czech Minister of Education, Youth and Sports and the Secretary-General of UNESCO. In 1998 it was awarded for the first time also for services in the sphere of development of higher education at the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education held in October 1998 in Paris.

10.3 INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN RESEARCH

Among the most important programmes of international co-operation in the sphere of research and development in which the Czech Republic co-operates are the 5th and 6th Framework Programmes (activities of The European Union), COST, EUREKA, EMBC, NATO, OECD, CEI (The Central European Initiative), INTAS and ESA and the national programmes (aimed for the financial support of the co-operation activities): KONTAKT, EUPRO, INGO and programmes of bilateral co-operation with the most important countries.

These programmes are open to all science and research subjects, in other words apart from higher education institutions, and often also in co-operation with

them. The contact centre is the Department of International Co-operation in Research and Development of the Ministry.

On the basis of bilateral agreements on scientific and technical co-operation between the governments of the Czech Republic and partner countries a whole range of bilateral co-operation projects are realized.

Higher education institutions are also involved in bilateral co-operation with Slovenia, Hungary, Federal Republic of Germany, Russian Federation, France (programme Barrande), U.S.A. (NSF, Fulbright Commission, Fermilab - high energy research), Japan, China, Greece, Italy, Poland and Slovakia.

The Czech Republic is full member of the CERN and JINR (Joint Institute of Nuclear Research) in Dubno.

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy

Karmelitská 7, 118 12 Praha 1, Phone: 257 193 111, Fax: 257 193 790

E-mail: info@msmt.cz, WWW Page: <http://www.msmt.cz>

Czech Rectors Conference

Kancelář České konference rektorů

Masarykova univerzita

Žerotínovo nám. 9, 601 77 Brno

Phone: 542 128 270, 542 128 272, Fax: 542 128 300, 542 128 262

E-mail: fojtikova@muni.cz

Council of Higher Education Institutions of the Czech Republic

Agentura Rady vysokých škol

José Martího 31, 162 52 Praha 6 - Veleslavín

Phone/Fax: 220 560 221, 220 172 149, E-mail: arvs@ftvs.cuni.cz

Centre for Higher Education Studies

Centrum pro studium vysokého školství

U Lužického semináře 13/90, 118 00 Praha 1, Phone: 257 011 311

E-mail: csvs@csvs.cz, WWW Page: <http://www.csvs.cz>

House of International Services of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports

Dům zahraničních služeb MŠMT

Senovážné náměstí 26, 111 06, Phone: 224 398 111, Fax: 224 229 697

E-mail: dzs@dzs.cz, WWW Page: <http://www.dzs.cz>

Institute for Information in Education

Ústav pro informace ve vzdělání

Senovážné náměstí 26, 111 21 Praha 1, Phone: 224 398 257

E-mail: sak@uiv.cz, WWW Page: <http://www.uiv.cz>

National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education

Národní ústav odborného vzdělávání

Weilova 1271/6, 102 00 Praha 10, Phone: 274 862 251, Fax: 274 863 380

E-mail: nuov@nuov.cz, WWW Page: <http://www.nuov.cz>

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H. Šebková, Š. Skuhrová, V. Štastná, L. Záruba

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